REMARKS

This amendment is responsive to the Office Action of July 2, 2002. Claims 1-84 are pending in the present application. In the Office Action, the drawings have been objected to as informally hand sketched. Additionally, claims 1-2, 5, 13-20, 43-44, 47, 55-62, 64-65, 68, and 76-83 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Heidel et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,342,047). Claims 3, 45, and 66 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Heidel et al. in view of Nolte et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,165,070). Claims 4, 46, and 67 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Heidel et al. in view of Pepper, Jr. (U.S. Patent No. 4,353,552). Claims 6-12, 48-54, and 69-75 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Heidel et al. in view of Bertram et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,796,389). Claims 21, 63, and 84 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Heidel et al. in view of Wiltshire et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,409,602). Claims 22-23, 26, 34-41, and 42 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Heidel et al. in view of Hedrick et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,135, 884) and further in view of Beeteson et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,795,430).

Claim 24 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Heidel et al. in view of Hedrick et al., further in view of Beeteson et al., and still further in view of Nolte et al. Claim 25 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Heidel et al. in view of Hedrick et al., further in view of Beeteson et al., and still further in view of Pepper, Jr. Claims 34-41 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Heidel et al. in view of Hedrick et al., further in view of Beeteson et al., and still further in view of Bertram at

al. Claims 12, 54, and 75 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Heidel et al. in view of Hedrick et al., further in view of Beeteson et al., and still further in view of Bertram at al. Claims 1, 21, 22, 42, 43, 63, 64, and 84 have been amended to clarify the presently-claimed invention. No new claims have been added, and no claims have been deleted. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the rejected claims. Applicants respectfully contend that the differences between the claimed invention and the prior art are such that the claimed invention is patentably distinct over the prior art.

Drawings Objection

The Examiner has required new formal drawings, stating that the current drawings are informally hand sketched. Applicants note that the current drawings are all computer generated with only the part numbers and lead lines having been drawn by hand. Applicants further note that no deficiencies in the requirements of 37 CFR §1.84 have been cited by the Examiner, and that the current drawings appear to meet all the requirements set forth in MPEP 608.02. However, in an effort to facilitate prosecution, new formal drawings have been submitted. A copy of these new formal drawings have also been sent to the official draftsperson under separate cover.

Claims Rejections

1. Claims Rejections - 35 U.S.C. §102(b) - Claims 1-2, 5, 13-20, 43-44, 47, 55-62, 64-65, 68, and 76-83

Claims 1-2, 5, 13-20, 43-44, 47, 55-62, 64-65, 68, and 76-83 are pending in the present application and were rejected in the Office Action dated July 2, 2002, under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Heidel et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,342,047). Applicants respectfully

traverse this rejection. However, in an effort to provide clarification only, independent claims 1, 43, and 64 have been amended. Claims 2, 5, and 13-20 depend from independent claim 1; claims 44, 47, and 55-62 depend from independent claim 43; and claims 65, 68, and 76-83 depend from independent claim 64. For brevity, only the basis for the rejection of independent claims 1, 43, and 64 are traversed in detail on the understanding that dependent claims 2, 5, 13-20, 47, 55-62, 65, 68, 76-83 are also patentably distinct over the prior art as they depend directly from claim 1, 43, or 64, respectively. Nevertheless, dependent claims 2, 5, 13-20, 47, 55-62, 65, 68, 76-83 include additional features that, in combination with those of claim 1, 43, or 64, provide further, separate, and independent bases for patentability.

The Examiner states that the Heidel et al. reference (U.S. Patent No. 5,342,047) teaches an electromechanical gaming machine that has touch screen gaming controls. However, the Heidel et al. reference fails to teach or suggest the claimed invention of the present application, because the Heidel et al. reference is directed towards a touch screen used in conjunction with video gaming machines. In contrast, the claimed invention of the present application is directed towards utilizing a substantially transparent touch panel in conjunction with mechanical reel spinning gaming machines. The Heidel et al. reference involves using a touch screen placed video display for displaying the image of rotating reels and, s such,relates specifically to a video gaming machine, as is clearly stated throughout the patent. Heidel et al. does **NOT** relate to a touch screen used in conjunction with a mechanical reel game. It should be noted that Fig. 2A of Heidel et al. merely shows a video image of a slot machine, not an actual reel spinning gaming

machine. Indeed, none of the cited references even contemplate the possibility of utilizing a touch panel located in front of mechanical reels.

Mechanical reel games are substantially different than video games from a marketing and consumer standpoint. Marketing personnel in the gaming industry commonly refer to "video players" and "slot players" (i.e., mechanical reel players) as mutually exclusive groups. Most players gravitate towards one group or the other. Slot players frequently do not trust the computerized look of video games, and video players often find reel games are boring. The synthesis of touch screen technology into a traditional reel-spinning machine is intended to bring benefit to both groups by adding some of the benefits of interactive video games to traditional mechanical slot machines.

Thus, the Heidel et al. reference only teaches the use of touch screens in a video gaming machine, and does NOT teach or suggest the claimed new mechanical gaming machine of the present application, which uses mechanically-rotating reels as a primary display device with a transparent touch panel located in front of the reels, such touch panel being used to control the reels. The claimed invention brings this previously impossible type of interactive play to the mechanical reel game environment.

In a video gaming machine, the video screen is the display device, and such display can be readily integrated with the touch screen. In contrast, in the claimed mechanical reel gaming machine, the mechanical reels are the display devices. These reels are separate from and located behind the touch screen, thus, requiring the implementation of a substantially transparent touch panel that allows both viewing and controlling of the mechanical reels. This act of controlling

mechanical components (e.g., reels), using substantially transparent touch panels that are placed in front of the mechanical components being controlled, is completely novel.

Accordingly, since the Heidel et al. reference does not teach or suggest the use of a touch panel in conjunction with mechanical reel gaming machines, Applicants respectfully submit that the 35 U.S.C. §102(b) rejection of claims 1-2, 5, 13-20, 43-44, 47, 55-62, 64-65, 68, and 76-83 has been overcome.

2. Claims Rejections - 35 U.S.C. §103(a) - Claims 3, 45, and 66

Claims 3, 45, and 66 are pending in the present application and were rejected in the Office Action dated July 2, 2002, under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Heidel et al. in view of Nolte et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,165,070). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection. However, in an effort to provide clarification only, independent claims 1, 43, and 64 have been amended. Claim 3 depends from independent claim 1, claim 45 depends from independent claim 43, and claim 66 depends from independent claim 64. For brevity, only the basis for the rejection of independent claims 1, 43, and 64 are traversed in detail on the understanding that dependent claims 3, 45, and 66 are patentably distinct over the prior art as they depend directly from claim 1, 43, or 64, respectively. Nevertheless, dependent claims 3, 45, and 66 include additional features that, in combination with those of independent claim 1, 43, or 64, provide further, separate, and independent bases for patentability.

The Examiner admits that the Heidel et al. reference does not teach a user selectively stopping spinning reels. Nevertheless, the Examiner asserts that Nolte et al. teaches a video slot

game machine in which a user has the ability to selectively stop individual slot reels. The Examiner also asserts that Heidel et al. teaches that buttons and touch screen controls are interchangeable. However, both the Heidel et al. reference and the Nolte et al. reference are directed towards using touch screens in conjunction with video gaming machines. In contrast, the claimed invention of the present application is directed towards utilizing substantially transparent touch panels to control mechanical components (e.g., reels) located behind the touch panels i.e., in conjunction with mechanical reel spinning gaming machines. Once again, neither of the cited references teach, suggest, or even contemplate the possibility of utilizing substantially transparent touch panels locked in front of mechanical reels. They relate only to video display gaming machines.

Accordingly, since the Heidel et al. and Nolte et al. references do not teach or suggest the use of a touch panel in conjunction with mechanical reel gaming machines, Applicants respectfully submit that the 35 U.S.C. §103(a) rejection of claims 3, 45, and 66 has been overcome.

3. Claims Rejections - 35 U.S.C. §103(a) - Claims 4, 46, 67

Claims 4, 46, 67 are pending in the present application and were rejected in the Office Action dated July 2, 2002, under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Heidel et al. in view of Pepper, Jr. (U.S. Patent No. 4,353,552). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection. However, in an effort to provide clarification only, independent claims 1, 43, and 64 have been amended. Claim 4 depends from independent claim 1, claim 46 depends from independent claim 43, and claim 67 depends from independent claim 64. For brevity, only the basis for the rejection of independent claims 1, 43, and 64 are traversed in detail on the understanding that

dependent claims 4, 46, 67 are patentably distinct over the prior art as they depend directly from claim 1, 43, or 64, respectively. Nevertheless, dependent claims 4, 46, 67 include additional features that, in combination with those of claims 1, 43, or 64, provide further, separate, and independent bases for patentability.

The Examiner admits that the Heidel et al. reference does not teach a pressure sensitive user interface, only a touch sensitive interface. Nevertheless, the Examiner asserts that the Pepper, Jr. reference teaches mounting a pressure sensitive surface on a video screen, and that movement in different directions and at variable pressure can be translated into a touch-screen interface. However, both the Heidel et al. reference and the Pepper, Jr. reference are directed towards using touch screens in conjunction with video gaming machines. In contrast, the claimed invention of the present application is directed towards utilizing substantially transparent touch panels to control mechanical components (e.g., reels) located behind the touch panels i.e., in conjunction with mechanical reel spinning gaming machines. Once again, neither of the cited references teach, suggest, or even contemplate the possibility of utilizing substantially transparent touch panels located in front of the mechanical reels. Again, these references relate only to the use of touch technology in conjunction with video gaming machines.

Accordingly, since the Heidel et al. and Pepper, Jr. references do not teach or suggest the use of a touch panel in conjunction with mechanical reel gaming machines, Applicants respectfully submit that the 35 U.S.C. §103(a) rejection of claims 4, 46, 67 has been overcome.

4. Claims Rejections - 35 U.S.C. §103(a) - Claims 6-12, 48-54, and 69-75

Claims 6-12, 48-54, and 69-75 are pending in the present application and were rejected in the Office Action dated July 2, 2002, under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Heidel et al. in view of Bertram et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,796,389). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection. However, in an effort to provide clarification only, independent claims 1, 43, and 64 have been amended. Claims 6-12 depend from independent claim 1, claims 48-54 depend from independent claim 43, and claims 69-75 depend from independent claim 64. For brevity, only the basis for the rejection of independent claims 1, 43, and 64 are traversed in detail on the understanding that dependent claims 6-12, 48-54, and 69-75 are patentably distinct over the prior art as they depend directly from claim 1, 43, or 64, respectively. Nevertheless, dependent claims 6-12, 48-54, and 69-75 include additional features that, in combination with those of claims 1, 43, or 64, provide further, separate, and independent bases for patentability.

The Examiner admits that the Heidel et al. reference does not teach the composition of the touch-screen employed in the gaming machine. Nevertheless, the Examiner asserts that the Bertram et al. reference teaches the use of a touch screen to reduce noise and cost. The Examiner also asserts the Bertram et al. reference discloses that a touch screen can utilize a plurality of transducers, and can be constructed from a composite material, such as glass, a metallic material, or a polymeric material. However, once again, both the Heidel et al. reference and the Bertram et al. reference are directed towards using touch screens in conjunction with video machines. Again, in contrast the claimed invention of the present application is directed towards utilizing substantially transparent touch panels to control mechanical components (e.g., reels) located behind the touch panels i.e., in conjunction with mechanical reel spinning gaming

machines. Specifically, the Bertram et al. reference refers to the use of a touch screen on a CRT (cathode ray tube) screen (i.e., a computer screen). Once again, neither of the cited references teach, suggest, or even contemplate the possibility of utilizing substantially transparent touch panels located in front of mechanical reels. These references are limited to video gaming machines.

Accordingly, since the Heidel et al. and Bertram et al. references do not teach or suggest the use of a touch panel in conjunction with mechanical reel gaming machines, Applicants respectfully submit that the 35 U.S.C. §103(a) rejection of claims 6-12, 48-54, and 69-75 has been overcome.

5. Claims Rejections - 35 U.S.C. §103(a) - Claims 21, 63, and 84

Claims 21, 63, and 84 are pending in the present application and were rejected in the Office Action dated July 2, 2002, under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Heidel et al. in view of Wiltshire et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,409,602). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection. However, in an effort to provide clarification only, independent claims 21, 63, and 84 have been amended.

The Examiner admits that the Heidel et al. reference does not teach using a plurality of touch panel terminals. Nevertheless, the Examiner asserts that the Wiltshire et al. reference discloses the use of multiple gaming terminals in a networked environment. However, the Heidel et al. reference is directed towards using touch screens in conjunction with video machines. In contrast, the claimed invention of the present application is directed towards utilizing substantially transparent touch panels to control mechanical components (e.g., reels)

located behind the touch panels i.e., in conjunction with mechanical reel-spinning gaming machines. The Wiltshire et al. reference is directed towards a networked gaming system having a server/host computer connected to a plurality of remote client/terminal computers via a network interface and communication pathways.

While the Wiltshire et al. reference does teach the concept of connecting touch screen display devices to the system and the concept of connecting mechanical reel games to the system, the Wiltshire et al. reference does NOT teach utilizing substantially transparent touch panels to control mechanical components (e.g., reels) located behind the touch panels, i.e., in conjunction with mechanical reel spinning gaming machines. It should be noted that Fig. 5A of Wiltshire et al. merely shows a computer video image of a slot machine, as opposed to an actual reel spinning gaming machine. There is no teaching in Wiltshire, et al. to combine touch screen technology with a mechanical reel gaming machine. Once again, neither of the cited references teach, suggest, or even contemplate the possibility of utilizing substantially transparent touch panels located in front of mechanical reels.

Accordingly, since the Heidel et al. and Wiltshire et al. references do not teach or suggest the use of a touch panel in conjunction with mechanical reel gaming machines, Applicants respectfully submit that the 35 U.S.C. §103(a) rejection of claims 21, 63, and 84 has been overcome.

6. Claims Rejections - 35 U.S.C. §103(a) - Claims 22-23, 26, 34-41, and 42

Claims 22-23, 26, 34-41, and 42 are pending in the present application and were rejected in the Office Action dated July 2, 2002, under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Heidel et al., in view of Hedrick et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,135, 884), and further in view of Beeteson et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,795,430). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection. However, in an effort to provide clarification only, independent claims 22 and 42 have been amended. Claims 23, 26, and 34-41 depend from independent claim 22. For brevity, only the basis for the rejection of independent claims 22 and 42 are traversed in detail on the understanding that dependent claims 23, 26, and 34-41 are patentably distinct over the prior art as they depend directly from independent claim 22. Nevertheless, dependent claims 23, 26, and 34-41 include additional features that, in combination with those of claim 22, provide further, separate, and independent bases for patentability.

The Examiner admits that the Heidel et al. reference does not disclose the use of a kit to retrofit existing game machines with touch-screen displays. Nevertheless, the Examiner asserts that the Hedrick et al. reference teaches that mechanical reel games can be retrofitted to apply new glass, reel strips, and firmware. Further, the Examiner asserts that the Hedrick et al. reference teaches that an LCD touch screen can be used as a video display. The Examiner also asserts that the Beeteson et al. reference discloses that a touch screen can be bonded to a CRT (cathode ray tube) monitor.

However, the Heidel et al., Hedrick et al., and Beeteson et al. references are all directed towards using touch screens in conjunction with video machines. Once again, the claimed invention of the present application is directed towards utilizing substantially transparent touch panels to control mechanical components (e.g., reels) located behind the touch panels, i.e., in conjunction with mechanical reel spinning gaming machines. Specifically, the Hedrick et al. patent teaches the use of a secondary display for providing video content as a way of avoiding mechanical retrofitting. Thus, the Hedrick et al. patent actually teaches away from the claimed invention, since Hedrick et al. discloses using video content in a video gaming machine to avoid the retrofitting of mechanical components in a mechanical gaming machine. Further, the Beeteson et al. patent discloses bonding a touch screen to a CRT (cathode ray tube) monitor for video display and, thus, has no application to mechanical components located within a mechanical reel gaming machine. Once again, none of the cited references teach, suggest, or even contemplate the possibility of utilizing substantially transparent touch panels located in front of mechanical reels.

Accordingly, since the Heidel et al., Hedrick et al., and Beeteson et al. references do not teach or suggest the use of a touch panel in conjunction with mechanical reel gaming machines, Applicants respectfully submit that the 35 U.S.C. §103(a) rejection of claims 22-23, 26, 34-41, and 42 has been overcome.

7. Claims Rejections - 35 U.S.C. §103(a) - Claim 24

Claim 24 is pending in the present application and was rejected in the Office Action dated July 2, 2002, under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Heidel et al. in view of Hedrick et al., further in view of Beeteson et al., and still further in view of Nolte et al. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection. However, in an effort to provide clarification only, independent claim 22 has been amended. Claim 24 depends from independent claim 22. For brevity, only the basis for the rejection of independent claim 22 is traversed in detail on the understanding that dependent claim 24 is patentably distinct over the prior art as it depends directly from claim 22. Nevertheless, dependent claim 24 includes additional features that, in combination with those of claim 22, provide further, separate, and independent bases for patentability.

The Examiner admits that the Heidel et al., Hedrick et al., and Beeteson et al. references do not disclose a user selectively stopping spinning reels. However, the Examiner asserts that Nolte et al. teaches a video slot game machine in which a user has the ability to selectively stop individual slot reels. The Examiner also asserts that Heidel et al. teaches that buttons and touch screen controls are interchangeable.

Once again, the Heidel et al., Hedrick et al., Beeteson et al., and Nolte et al. references are all directed towards using touch screens in conjunction with video machines. In contrast, the claimed invention of the present application is directed towards utilizing substantially transparent touch panels to control mechanical components (e.g., reels) located behind the touch panels, i.e.,

in conjunction with mechanical reel spinning gaming machines. Accordingly, none of the cited references teach, suggest, or even contemplate the possibility of utilizing substantially transparent touch panels located in front of mechanical reels.

Therefore, since the Heidel et al., Hedrick et al., Beeteson et al., and Nolte et al. references do not teach or suggest the use of a touch panel in conjunction with mechanical reel gaming machines, Applicants respectfully submit that the 35 U.S.C. §103(a) rejection of claim 24 has been overcome.

8. Claims Rejections - 35 U.S.C. §103(a) - Claim 25

Claim 25 is pending in the present application and was rejected in the Office Action dated July 2, 2002, under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Heidel et al. in view of Hedrick et al., further in view of Beeteson et al., and still further in view of Pepper, Jr. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection. However, in an effort to provide clarification only, independent claim 22 has been amended. Claim 25 depends from independent claim 22. For brevity, only the basis for the rejection of independent claim 22 is traversed in detail on the understanding that dependent claim 25 is patentably distinct over the prior art as it depends directly from independent claim 22. Nevertheless, dependent claim 25 includes additional features that, in combination with those of claim 22, provide further, separate, and independent bases for patentability.

The Examiner admits that the Heidel et al., Hedrick et al., and Beeteson et al. references do not teach a pressure sensitive user interface, only a touch sensitive interface. Nevertheless,

the Examiner asserts that the Pepper, Jr. reference teaches mounting a pressure sensitive surface on a video screen, and that movement in different directions and at variable pressure can be translated into a touch-screen interface. However, the Heidel et al., Hedrick et al., Beeteson et al., and Pepper, Jr. references are all directed towards using touch screens in conjunction with video machines. In contrast, the claimed invention of the present application is directed towards utilizing substantially transparent touch panels to control mechanical components (e.g., reels) located behind the touch panels i.e., in conjunction with mechanical reel spinning gaming machines. Once again, none of the cited references teach, suggest, or even contemplate the possibility of utilizing substantially transparent touch panels located in front of mechanical reels.

Accordingly, since the Heidel et al., Hedrick et al., Beeteson et al., and Pepper, Jr. references do not teach or suggest the use of a touch panel in conjunction with mechanical reel gaming machines, Applicants respectfully submit that the 35 U.S.C. §103(a) rejection of claim 25 has been overcome.

9. Claims Rejections - 35 U.S.C. §103(a) - Claims 34-41

Claims 34-41 are pending in the present application and were rejected in the Office Action dated July 2, 2002, under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Heidel et al. in view of Hedrick et al., further in view of Beeteson et al., and still further in view of Bertram at al. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection. However, in an effort to provide clarification only, independent claim 22 has been amended. Claims 34-41 depend from independent claim 22. For brevity, only the basis for the rejection of independent claim 22 is traversed in

detail on the understanding that dependent claims 34-41 are patentably distinct over the prior art as they depend directly from claim 22. Nevertheless, dependent claims 34-41 include additional features that, in combination with those of claim 22, provide further, separate, and independent bases for patentability.

The Examiner admits that the Heidel et al., Hedrick et al., and Beeteson et al. references do not teach the composition of the touch-screen employed in the gaming machine. Nevertheless, the Examiner asserts that the Bertram et al. reference teaches the use of a touch screen to reduce noise and cost. The Examiner also asserts the Bertram et al. reference discloses that a touch screen can utilize a plurality of transducers, and can be constructed from a composite material, such as glass, a metallic material, or a polymeric material. However, the Heidel et al., Hedrick et al., Beeteson et al., and Bertram et al. references are all directed towards using touch screens in conjunction with video machines. In contrast, the claimed invention of the present application is directed towards utilizing substantially transparent touch panels to control mechanical components (e.g., reels) located behind the touch panels i.e., in conjunction with mechanical reel spinning gaming machines. Specifically, the Bertram et al. patent is directed towards the use of a touch screen on a CRT (cathode ray tube) screen (i.e., a computer screen). Once again, none of the cited references teach, suggest, or even contemplate the possibility of utilizing substantially transparent touch panels located in front of mechanical reels.

Accordingly, since the Heidel et al., Hedrick et al., Beeteson et al., and Bertram et al. references do not teach or suggest the use of a touch panel in conjunction with mechanical reel

gaming machines, Applicants respectfully submit that the 35 U.S.C. §103(a) rejection of claims 34-41 has been overcome.

10. Claims Rejections - 35 U.S.C. §103(a) - Claims 12, 54, and 75

Claims 12, 54, and 75 are pending in the present application and were rejected in the Office Action dated July 2, 2002, under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Heidel et al. in view of Hedrick et al., further in view of Beeteson et al., and still further in view of Bertram at al. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection. However, in an effort to provide clarification only, independent claims 1, 43, and 64 have been amended. Claim 12 depends from independent claim 1, claim 54 depends from independent claim 43, and claim 75 depends from independent claim 64. For brevity, only the basis for the rejection of independent claims 1, 43, and 64 are traversed in detail on the understanding that dependent claims 12, 54, and 75 are patentably distinct over the prior art as they depend directly from claim 1, 43, or 64, respectively. Nevertheless, dependent claims 12, 54, and 75 include additional features that, in combination with those of claims 1, 43, or 64, provide further, separate, and independent bases for patentability.

The Examiner admits that the Heidel et al., Hedrick et al., Beeteson et al., and Bertram et al. references do not teach the use of a bezel to protect the transducers. Nevertheless, the Examiner asserts that the Heidel et al., Hedrick et al., Beeteson et al., and Bertram et al. references do teach that electrodes/transducers are located substantially near the exterior edge of a screen. Further, the Examiner asserts that it is well known that screens have bezels protecting

the outer edge of the screen. However, the Heidel et al., Hedrick et al., Beeteson et al., and Bertram et al. references are all directed towards using touch screens in conjunction with video machines. The claimed invention of the present application, however, is directed towards utilizing substantially transparent touch panels to control mechanical components (e.g., reels) located behind the touch panels, i.e., in conjunction with mechanical reel spinning gaming machines. Specifically, the Bertram et al. patent discloses the use of a touch screen on a CRT (cathode ray tube) screen (i.e., a computer screen). Once again, none of the cited references teach, suggest, or even contemplate the possibility of utilizing substantially transparent touch panels located in front of mechanical reels.

Accordingly, since the Heidel et al., Hedrick et al., Beeteson et al., and Bertram et al. references do not teach or suggest the use of a touch panel in conjunction with mechanical reel gaming machines, Applicants respectfully submit that the 35 U.S.C. §103(a) rejection of claims 12, 54, and 75 has been overcome.

CLOSURE

Applicants have made an earnest and bona fide effort to clarify the issues before the Examiner and to place this case in condition for allowance. In view of the foregoing discussions, it is clear that the differences between the claimed invention and the prior art are such that the claimed invention is patentably distinct over the prior art. Therefore, reconsideration and allowance of all of claims 1-84 is believed to be in order, and an early Notice of Allowance to this effect is respectfully requested. If the Examiner should have any questions concerning the

foregoing, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned attorney at (310) 712-8319. The undersigned attorney can normally be reached Monday through Friday from about 9:30 AM to 5:30 PM Pacific time.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: 10/10/02

BROOKE W. QUIST
Reg. No. 45,030
BROWN RAYSMAN MILLSTEIN FELDER
& STEINER LLP
1880 Century Park East, Suite 711
Los Angeles, California 90067
(310) 712-8300

RLK:elm